

# Building Blocks for Effective Housing Elements

## Special Needs

### Persons with Disabilities

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*Government Code Section 65583(a)(7)) requires “An analysis of any special housing needs, such as those of the elderly, persons with disabilities, large families, farmworkers, families with female heads of households, and families and persons in need of emergency shelter...”*

Special needs are those associated with specific demographic or occupational groups which call for very specific program responses, such as preservation of single-room occupancy hotels or the development of units with larger bedroom counts. The statute specifically requires analysis of the special housing needs of the elderly, the disabled, female-headed households, large families, farmworkers and homeless persons and families. These special needs groups often spend a disproportionate amount of their income to secure safe and decent housing and are sometimes subject to discrimination based on their specific needs or circumstances.

In addition to the groups listed above, the analysis of special needs should also include any other group the locality deems appropriate.

#### I. REQUISITE ANALYSIS

A thorough analysis will assist a locality identify groups with the most serious housing needs in order to develop and prioritize responsive programs. The analysis of each special needs group must include the following:

- A quantification of the total number of persons and households in the special housing needs group, including tenure, where possible.
- A quantification and qualitative description of the need, including a description of the potential housing problems faced by the special needs groups, a description of any existing resources or programs, and an assessment of unmet needs.
- Identification of potential program or policy options and resources to address the need.

## Analysis of Housing Needs for Persons with Disabilities:

In addition to the requisite analysis above, a thorough analysis of the special housing needs for persons with disabilities should include:

- A discussion of resources, including existing housing and services for persons with disabilities. Contact local service providers such as Centers for Independent Living, county health/mental health departments, health-related nonprofits (United Cerebral Palsy, Crippled Children's Society, Heart Fund, Lung Association, Diabetes Association, Cancer Society, etc.), or school districts that maintain the number of students enrolled in special education programs, students requiring special accommodations and/or transportation, and students participating in home schooling.
- Identification of housing types (i.e., residential care facilities) which can accommodate persons with disabilities and discuss zoning and capacity available to facilitate these housing types.
- Based on findings from analysis of special housing needs for persons with disabilities, identify housing programs or strategies planned to address identified needs.

### *Sample Tables*

The following are samples to assist in organizing critical information. The information provided in the tables should be tailored to the jurisdiction and followed by appropriate analysis. These tables are not intended to substitute for addressing the analytical requirements of housing element law.

**Persons with Disability by Employment Status**

|  | Number | Percent |
|--|--------|---------|
| Age 5-64, Employed Persons with a Disability         |        |         |
| Age 5-64, Not Employed Persons with a Disability     |        |         |
| Persons Age 65 Plus with a Disability                |        |         |
| Total Persons with a Disability                      |        |         |
| Total Population (Civilian Non-institutional)        |        |         |
| <i>Source: Census Bureau (2000 Census SF 3: P42)</i> |        |         |

### Persons with Disabilities by Disability Type

|  | Number | Percent |
|--|--------|---------|
| Total Disabilities                                   |        |         |
| Total Disabilities for Ages 5-64                     |        |         |
| Sensory Disability                                   |        |         |
| Physical disability                                  |        |         |
| Mental disability                                    |        |         |
| Self-care disability                                 |        |         |
| Go-outside-home disability                           |        |         |
| Employment disability                                |        |         |
| Total Disabilities for Ages 65 and Over              |        |         |
| Sensory Disability                                   |        |         |
| Physical disability                                  |        |         |
| Mental disability                                    |        |         |
| Self-care disability                                 |        |         |
| Go-outside-home disability                           |        |         |
| <i>Source: Census Bureau (2000 Census SF 3: P41)</i> |        |         |

## Key Ideas

### II. HELPFUL HINTS

- The Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Proposition 63 approved by the voters in November 2004 funds activities that expand mental health services to children, adults, and seniors with severe mental illnesses who cannot obtain services through other funds. MHSA requires that each county submit a MHSA Plan to the State in order to secure funding of allocation. Each county's plan contains pertinent information on persons with disabilities which may be useful in preparing the special needs analysis. Information is available on the Department's website (see links below) or by email or calling the Department directly at [mhsa@dmh.ca.gov](mailto:mhsa@dmh.ca.gov) or (800) 972-MHSA.

### III. MODEL ANALYSES

[Sample Analysis](#)

### IV. LINKS

[HCD: SB 520 Technical Assistance Paper](#)

[HCD: Universal Design Model Ordinance](#)

[HCD: New Home Universal Design Checklist](#)

[California Department of Rehabilitation: Regional Centers for the Developmentally Disabled](#)

[U.S. Census Bureau Factfinder, 2000 Census Data](#): Access the 2000 Census SF3 File Summary and select the detailed table:

- P41 Age by Types of Disability for the Civilian Non-institutionalized population 5 years and over with disabilities.
- P42 Sex by Age by Disability Status by Employment Status for the Civilian Non-institutionalized Population 5 years and Over

[U.S. Census Bureau Factfinder, 1990 Census Data](#): Access the 1990 Census Summary File and select the detailed table:

- P66 Sex by Age by Work Disability Status and Employment

[Department of Housing and Urban Development \(HUD\): Resources for Persons with Disabilities](#)

[California Department of Mental Health: Mental Health Services Act \(MHSA\) County Plans](#)

[Bazon Center for Mental Health Law: Disability Rights/Fair Housing Issue Resources](#)

[Opening Doors - A Housing Initiative for the Disabled Community](#). Providing information and technical assistance on affordable housing issues to people with disabilities, their families, advocates, and service providers.

[Pacific Disability and Business Technical Assistance Center](#) Provides information and resources on fair housing issues and a listing of regional ADA centers.

[Disability Resources: The Disability Resource Monthly Guide](#)

[Construction Guidelines for Visitable Homes](#)

[Visitability in Pennsylvania: Visitability Toolbox](#)

[Easy Living Home](#)

[Building Innovations: Aging in Place](#)

[Visitability Initiative Project](#)